

Some additional comments:

The green lines on the map represent RWT. RWT use represents the most flexible and greatest (re)use of these irreplaceable transportation corridors. RWT is consistent with:

1. MAPC's Transit Oriented Development: This corridor goes right to existing residential and business infrastructure.
2. It is likely that in many cases, Walk to Transit is probable and bike to transit even more so. Local town or business-sponsored bus / vans can provide the "last mile" connectivity to business and residential destinations if walking or biking is impractical due to distance or the reality of weather in the Northeast.
3. Cyclists that want to bike 20 miles to work still can. The 99% of the rest of us (me included) can have a real commuting choice other than the single occupant car.
4. A rail solution is the best choice over Bus Rapid Transit for many reasons:
  - BRT is not scalable. To increase capacity, additional buses, with drivers, must be added. Light Rail or CNG Rail cars can simply add cars with no or incremental labor cost increases.
  - BRT uses road technology. Roads need to be plowed. Roads get damaged by plowing. Roads get potholes. Roads deteriorate far more quickly than steel rails and ties. Roads are subject to icing, particularly when they see fewer vehicles traversing them. Significant reengineering of the rail roadbed would be required to create a road surface.

Rails are largely immune to weather issues other than linear expansion / contraction which is well understood and compensated for. I do not know of any plowing that was required on the commuter rail lines this winter even with the record amounts of snow. My observation of the Fitchburg line was that trains operated more slowly over grade crossing but only for short times after heavy snows. Rail maintenance is on an exception basis based on regular, automated inspection car surveys. (Think about how many road bridge sections have unexpectedly dropped out or developed huge potholes versus track failures on the commuter rail).

- Rail recycling
- Route flexibility / commuter rail interconnect
- Environmentally most friendly- fuel wood ties, steel rail, eventual electrification
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